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SUMMARY OF RECENT [REDACTED] U.P.O.W.S. ON THE SATELLITES
(March - June 1956)

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I. POLAND

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The majority of [REDACTED] reports selected from those issued since 1 March 1956 describe confusion in the Polish Communist Party after the designation of Stalin. They detail manifestations of dissatisfaction evident at various levels of the Party and, to a lesser extent, outside the Party.

The Party hierarchy can be divided into seven groups: (1) Politburo and other prominent Party members, (2) general Party membership including rank-and-file, (3) intellectuals, (4) journalists, (5) youth groups, (6) scientists, and (7) parliament groups. Dissatisfaction reportedly centers around poor economic conditions, lack of freedom within the Party, general Politburo policies, and to a lesser extent, dislike for the Soviet Union and Khrushchev. All except the first group direct their dissatisfaction at the top leadership.

Reports indicate that Party differences and discontent within these groups have been expressed as follows: On the Politburo level, Party First Secretary Ghab is characterized as wanting to stop the process of liberalization by any means and is contrasted with Premier Cyrankiewicz who allegedly is encouraging discussion and open criticism in the press.

[REDACTED] asserts that two opposing groups are forming in Poland, the one rallying around Cyrankiewicz, the other around Ghab. The former favors while the latter opposes present liberal policies. The opposing views presumably will have to be settled by gaining Moscow support for either one or the other policy. High ranking Poles maintain two positions. One group feels that current criticism should be cut off, while the other group doubts that it could be cut off [REDACTED].

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Criticism of the Party leadership is said [REDACTED] to have started in mid-1954 [REDACTED]. About March 1956, [REDACTED] local leaders met to pool their criticism of mistakes by top [REDACTED]

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leaders. Bierut in one instance was naked point blank why wages were so low [redacted]. Same time before May, Central Committee (CC) members touring the country to discourage criticism were unsuccessful in holding back this criticism directed against the regime and the Soviet Union. In Lodz CC Secretary Matwin was booted by factory workers [redacted] 25X1A2g
An audience of rank-and-file Communists in a factory near Warsaw asked Party discussion leaders pointedly why the exposure of Stalin was so late, and why Stalin's men in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria remained unpunished [redacted] 25X1A2g
[redacted] asserts that discontent now is apparently spreading beyond Party and intellectual circles, and if it continues to rise in intensity the regime or the Soviets will have to take forcible measures. 25X1A2g

Some Communist journalists and writers have spoken frankly. For example, Eda Ferfel (chief editor of Zycie Warszawy and wife of the editor of Trybuna Ludu, the main Party newspaper) demanded the resignation of the whole Party Central Committee [redacted]. At a special meeting attended by Party leaders in Warsaw on 13 December 1955 to discuss cultural work in the new Five-Year Plan, writers, artists and teachers persistently, bluntly and rudely questioned top leaders on economic matters. The latter had few answers, made no attempt to stop criticism, and listened attentively [redacted]. 25X1A2g

The assistant chief editor of Zycie Warszawy was reprimanded and the censor fired for allowing a letter to appear asking why the release of Szpychalski and others associated with Gomulka* was not accompanied by public discussion. The victims claimed they thought they were adhering to the Party line in the matter. The editor and staff of the paper, who did not like the decision against the censor, requested he be reinstated. Soon after his reinstatement, he was again dismissed.

Security forces surrounded the premises of the printing plant of Zycie Warszawy and of Po Prostu (youth publication) on 30 March 1956. All copies of Po Prostu were confiscated because the paper proposed abolition of the ZMP (Youth Organization) for its lack of purpose and corruption of its

* Gomulka, formerly a Party secretary who was purged in 1948 apparently for nationalistic leanings, has been partially rehabilitated within the past year.

top leadership. It also criticized the fact that all kinds of consumer goods are available to the Party elite but not to the civilian population. All copies of Tribuna Wolnosci carrying an article implying disrespect to Ochab also were confiscated [REDACTED].

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At a meeting of newspaper editors, district Party secretaries, and factory managers, Ida Werfel vehemently declared she has lost faith in the Party and regime [REDACTED]. Roman Werfel's removal as editor of Tribuna Ludu is reported to be partly the result of not exercising sufficient stringency in control of articles appearing in his paper [REDACTED].

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Dissent appears to be most advanced among Polish Youth. The editor-in-chief of Po frontu has stated that a new organization of Polish Revolutionary Youth will soon be formed, not within the present ZMP but independent of it [REDACTED]. Another report [REDACTED] describes such a youth organization as intended to be modeled after "Revolutionary Youth Councils" active during the war. Its aim would be to "expose the destructive elements which had penetrated the highest ranks of the ZMP."

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In mid-January 1956, at a meeting of scientists, Party members instead of adhering to the agenda to be discussed, engaged in harsh criticism of economic shortages and the deception and betrayal of the people which they involved [REDACTED].

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[REDACTED] was present at many parliament group discussions in late May 1956, where argument became heatedly anti-Russian and sounded as if the groups wanted to destroy the Party [REDACTED].

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Polish contempt of Posomarcelo, Soviet Ambassador, is prevalent, and journalists of the press and radio and CC members call him a "perfect idiot." Khrushchev particularly is unpopular. He is blamed for crimes in the Ukraine and is held responsible for Ochab's dominant position [REDACTED]. He was insulted indirectly by CC member Helena Kortowska during a Sixth Plenum meeting about 20 March as a result of which he left the meeting [REDACTED].

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A veteran Communist [REDACTED] who was imprisoned in the USSR during the war and released in 1946, after Khrushchev's secret speech On Stalin, described at length in an organized meeting the horrors of his imprisonment in the USSR. Considerable discussion as to the possibility of unnatural death for

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Bierut in Moscow arose in Party circles. Contempt for Soviet medical know-how was displayed [REDACTED]. Similar questions on Bierut's death arose among workers in a factory in Zeran [REDACTED].

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Winiewicz, Polish Deputy Foreign Minister, stated that the question of investigating the Katyn massacres was raised and is being seriously considered [REDACTED].

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Katz-Suchy, Polish delegate to the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), is quoted as saying that Poland will never turn against the Soviet Union, but may evolve a relationship toward Russia analogous to that of England and France vis-a-vis the US [REDACTED].

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Gomulka wrote a sharply worded letter in reply to Oehab's 6 April 1956 statement in Trybuna Ludu, but was refused publication. The Party is negotiating his readmittance to the CC on hard conditions. Many editors on Trybuna Ludu want better terms for Gomulka, and radio anti-file Communists want Gomulka to be given a chance to defend himself in discussions with Party leaders [REDACTED] re-reports that the Party is trying to persuade Gomulka to re-join the Party but that the latter is playing hard-to-get. His terms are public disgrace to several present Party leaders. These terms are under discussion by the Party leadership.

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[REDACTED] generalizes on the significance of the second-level Party and government changes at efforts by the leadership to convince the general public of the genuineness of liberalization policy (by promoting former Socialists and firing personnel associated with Stalinist methods). These documents also speculate on the inner Party

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maneuverings for position, but do not seem of particular significance from the point of view of unrest or instability inasmuch as such maneuverings have been reported during past years.

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[redacted] revision of Party history is to include posthumous rehabilitation of over a hundred former Polish Communists who had been liquidated in the Soviet Union. Moscow allegedly has given formal approval, suggesting that their liquidation be attributed to Stalin/Beria machinations. Moscow invited Polish representatives to come to the Soviet Union to examine the records and prison camps to ascertain the facts for themselves.

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The significance of [redacted] analysis of Gomulka's position is the [redacted] implication that there is sympathy and total lack of sympathy for Gomulka personally and ideologically. This apparently contradicts the implications of some of the reports summarized above.

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[redacted] suggests that the present rightist deviation in Poland is of considerable strength and poses a problem for the leadership as to how to eliminate it. [redacted] has little doubt that sooner or later the rightist deviation will be struck down.

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The Central Party Active (CAP) is composed of "leading Party elective functionaries, (many of whom occupied the highest governmental, cultural and mass organization posts), the Central Party appointive functionaries, and the first secretaries of the voivodship [provincial] Party committees." It comprises at least 150-200 members. It originated spontaneously perhaps two years ago, and discussed Party policies and affairs both informally and as a collective group. The consensus of their deliberations was relayed to the Politburo, which has served as a basis since December 1954 for keeping in touch with Party morale and thinking.

Discontent in the Party derives from poor economic conditions; a moral revulsion at "bastard" Party methods; outmoded ideology, considered inappropriate to modern times; lack of inner Party democracy and freedom of expression (in the press, for example); and the falsehoods of Party propaganda, which the CAP feels should be based on facts.

The history of the CP conflict with the top leadership dates from a December 1954 meeting at which CAP members were invited to state their thoughts freely. Their criticisms

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(along the lines of the above) came as a complete surprise to the top leadership who took it under advisement, but actually was very reluctant to accede to the request for changes. To the present time the conflict has continued with little compromise of firmly held convictions in prospect.

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[redacted] divides the conflict into three phases: (1) December 1954 - May 1955, (2) May 1955 - September 1955, and (3) September 1955 - June 1956.

In phase one, meetings held for liberalization within the Party resulted in a fairly pointed warning by the Politburo against rightist deviation.

Phase two was essentially a period of quiet in view of the warning and in the hope that the Politburo would take action in the desired direction. However, Swiatlo's defection weakened the Politburo position, and particularly that of Rukiewicz, Minister of Public Security. The CAP pushed their advantage and succeeded in getting him fired, after some hesitation by Bierut and Berman.

The third phase was characterized by considerable activity by journalists and "cautious aggressiveness" by the CAP. The magazine Szalki was castigated for overstepping the bounds of propriety in satirizing an odious type of Party member. The Poem for Adults written by Waczyk, which appeared in Nova Kultura, caused considerable consternation in the Politburo, but even under heavy Politburo pressure, the editor and staff almost to a man refused to disavow the poem. As a consequence the whole staff was fired by Berman who had considerable difficulty finding replacements because of the refusal of the prospective staff members to serve. In a third instance, Schaf, a prominent member of the CAP, claimed in Przeglad Kulturalny that Marxist sociological research had stopped with a pre-revolutionary book by Lenin. He was severely castigated for several hours by Bierut, Ochnab, and Berman as a result of which he recanted. There was also a thorough shake-up in the staff of Tribuna Ludu for lack of ideological firmness.

D [redacted] would not predict the outcome of the struggle, though he doubted seriously that the Politburo could afford to institute ameliorative changes. They would need Moscow approval, assurance that the political and economic system would not be endangered, and absolute assurance of their own continued control and power.

II. Czechoslovakia

Recent reports on Czechoslovakia indicate that the sensational disclosures of the CPSU 20th Party Congress have resulted in a degree of unrest, manifested by criticism of the Party and confusion among the Party hierarchy and lower levels, which is recent only to that experienced in Poland. Criticism of the regime has been reported to have been expressed by almost all segments of the population, specifically by students, intelligentsia, second level and provincial Party leaders, low level Party functionaries, border guards and the men in the street. Confusion as to what measures should be taken to align the CPC with the new look as laid down by Moscow and how to reconcile the new policy with established beliefs has reportedly disturbed the Party leaders and membership at all levels.

The most significant example of unrest is the recent students' May Day parade at which an unprecedented degree of anti-state criticism was expressed by slogans, posters, demonstrations and the presentation to regime officials of resolutions formulated by student groups. Eyewitness reporters from Prague state that the demonstration, carried out in defiance of police orders, was specifically aimed at two officials of the regime, Kudrna, Minister of Education, and Nejedly, Minister without portfolio, who is considered responsible for the共青团 organization. Resentment against the high degree of conformity required by the regime and the inferior living conditions to which students are subjected were also expressed. [REDACTED]

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Indicative of the widespread and fragmented feeling of discontent is the fact that the demonstrations were not confined to Prague or to a single incident. Information from the Czech and Slovak press suggests that protests were manifested throughout the country and followed an organised pattern. Beginning with student meetings in Prague at which resolutions expressing student grievances in education, youth problems, and the lack of political and cultural freedom were presented to regime officials, the movement spread via student couriers to Bratislava and other urban centers, culminating in the successful demand by Slovak students that their resolution be published in one of the main regime-controlled youth periodicals. [REDACTED]

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While no other exact expression of protest of this magnitude against the regime has been reported, a number of well-placed observers have recently stated that a real crisis does indeed exist. Within the Party, high level leaders reportedly are in agreement over the possible rehabilitation of Slobinsky and his colleagues and the problem of finding a scapegoat for the Slansky purge. [REDACTED]

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II. CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Recent reports on Czechoslovakia indicate that the sensational disclosures of the CPSU 20th Party Congress have resulted in a degree of unrest, manifested by criticism of the Party and confusion among the Party hierarchy and lower levels, which is second only to that experienced in Poland. Criticism of the regime reportedly has been expressed by almost all segments of the population, specifically by students, intelligentsia, second level and provincial Party leaders, low level Party functionaries, border guards and the man in the street. Confusion as to what measures should be taken to align the CPC with the new look as laid down by Moscow and how to reconcile the new policy with established beliefs has reportedly disturbed the Party leaders and membership at all levels.

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Indicative of the widespread and deep-seated feeling of discontent is the fact that the demonstrations were not confined to Prague or to a single incident. Information from the Czech and Slovak press suggests that protests were manifested throughout the country and followed an organized pattern. Beginning with student meetings in Prague at which resolutions expressing student grievances on education, youth problems, and the lack of political and cultural freedom were presented to regime officials, the movement spread via student couriers to Bratislava and other urban centers, culminating in the successful demand by Slovak students that their resolution be published in one of the main regime-controlled youth periodicals [redacted]

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While no other overt expression of protest of this magnitude against the regime has been reported, a number of well-placed observers have recently stated that a real crisis does exist. Within the Party, high level leaders reportedly are in controversy over the possible rehabilitation of Slansky and his followers and the problem of finding a scapegoat for the Slansky purge [REDACTED]

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As the result of equivocation on the highest levels, serious discontent has been expressed among the Party intelligentsia, at the managerial and directing level of the Party and among provincial Party chief. The burden of complaint has been directed against the Party leaders who have lost the confidence of their subordinates. It bears a strong resemblance to the demands of the discontented element in Poland for increased freedom of thought and certain basic civil liberties. The removal of Cepicka from the Politburo and his positions as Vice Premier and Minister of Defense, and the postponement of the Party Conference scheduled for June 1956 are believed due to pressure from lower Party levels [REDACTED].

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That the crisis exists throughout the Party is indicated by reports that lower Party functionaries have been meeting in discussion groups and discussing that the Party course be altered to accord better with Czech conditions [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] That criticism expressed at such meetings is felt to be significant may be assumed from the fact that the Party has issued new instructions stating that the previous practice of forwarding names of critics in reports of Party meetings be discontinued. Henceforth criticism is to be attributed only to the group and a full written report is sent to the Central Committee for study [REDACTED]

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The degree of disintegration in Party authority also may be observed [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] stated that the political officer of his battalion, following a meeting at brigade headquarters, openly accused Ministers

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Stoll and Hejedly and Vice Premier Kepecky of mistakes, belief in the "cult of personality," and culpability in the Slansky affair [REDACTED] the campaign to denigrate Stalin resulted in a noticeable drop in morale and interest in Party matters among members. The fact that the political officers of the brigade were instructed to hold discussions on the Party line shift but were told not to answer any questions on the part of the troops was further evidence of the confusion among Party leaders [REDACTED]

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That some liberalization of the repressive control of the regime has taken place is suggested by the fact that the expressions of discontent described above were voiced at all, as well as by a report that mail censorship has been relaxed to permit persons sending mail abroad to do so without presenting such mail to the post office with identification documents [REDACTED]. That any relaxation has occurred in the fundamental mechanisms of control seems unlikely in view of the reports which state that many of the students involved in the May Day parade were arrested [REDACTED] as were some of the low level Party functionaries involved in criticism of Party leaders and policy [REDACTED]

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III. SUMMARY

The current unrest, manifested by criticism of Party members and confusion on all levels of the Party hierarchy, which has followed the Soviet campaign to denigrate Stalin and repudiate some of the best effective features of his policy, can be discerned also in Hungary. The first meeting of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Workers (Communist) Party after the 20th CPSU Party Congress was held in March 1956. It took place in an atmosphere of violence and retribution against Party leader Rakosi and was dissolved after two days without either a vote or resolution having been reached.

The dissension among high Party leaders was mirrored in subsequent meetings of lower level Party functionaries and organizations. District branches were instructed to hold meetings of Party activists to receive guidance on the shift in the Party line. Despite the presence of members of the Central Committee, several of these meetings expressed strong criticism of the Party line and Rakosi's position. Further direct criticism of Rakosi, specifically as the "murderer" of Rajk, was made at the March meeting of the Writers' Association. The meeting adjourned in disorder. The next meeting in April 1956 resulted in demands for self-criticism on the part of Rakosi and of critical discussions of the Central Committee and the present leadership. Meetings of Party members of the Hungarian Academy of Science, the Hungarian Radio Staff and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs displayed the same spirit of dissatisfaction and reluctance to accept Party discipline [redacted]

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In a review of the growing expression of discontent over the past two or three years among Hungarian writers, the so-called writers' revolt, one report describes events similar to those provoked by recalcitrant Polish journalists. Forceful measures such as confiscation of issues of newspapers containing provocative material and the forcing of the premises of the Writers' House in Szilagyi occurred in late 1955. Hungarian writers have obstinately persisted in and refused to disavow expressions of anti-regime sentiment despite recurrent pressure from highly placed members of the hierarchy. Similarly, leaders have had difficulty in replacing staff [redacted]

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writers who had been dismissed or had resigned with more pliable personnel. The writers' discontent appears to be directed at the leadership's too rigid prescription of permissible public criticism, particularly when it refers to past injustice and the arbitrary persecution of former writers and Party leaders.

Confusion on the part of the hierarchy and lower echelons is further indicated by reports emanating from Budapest. It is stated that contradictory opinions have been publicly expressed by high Party officials, that courses on the history of the Communist Party have been suspended to be replaced by analysis of the subjects discussed by the 20th Party Congress, and that the hierarchy is unable to give Party secretaries in factories and institutions any guidance to explain the sudden changes [REDACTED]. Furthermore, governmental officials are reported to avoid taking any action until the situation has been clarified [REDACTED] 25X1A2g

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Although some indications of response to this state of discontent have been reported, notably Rakosi's self-critical speech of 18 May 1956, it appears probable that he will remain top man in the regime, possibly heading up some form of collective leadership. However, the possible emergence of factionalism is foreshadowed in a report defining the membership of a group growing in prominence and following a line "between the positions of First Secretary Rakosi and former Premier Nagy." Janos Kadar, a principal exponent of this group,* is cited in other reports as maintaining a position of opposition to the Rakosi leadership. One report asserts that Zoltan Vas* belongs to a small anti-Rakosi group headed by Kadar.

* Now Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, but formerly Secretary General of the Supreme Economic Council and President of the National Planning Office.

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IV. BULGARIA

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_____ reports on Bulgaria concern discussions among top leaders on the Central Committee Plenum held from 31 March to 2 April 1956. The subjects discussed were the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU, Chervenkov's demotion, and whether to admit malpractices in the trial of Kostov for his alleged Titoist leanings. The line-up of factions, consisting of pro and anti-Chervenkov people and middle-of-the-roaders (including Chervenkov's eventual successor Yugov) were described. The pressure of colleagues on Chervenkov in these meetings to practise "self-criticism" was also related.

The reports summarize alleged conversations in the preparatory Politburo meetings. One speaker presented the details of the Kostov trial as a horrifying result of the Stalinist dictatorship. General Frunski, a partisan commander and war-time collaborator with Tito, told of the pressures he underwent in Moscow where he was interrogated for a month on his Titoist connections.

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A _____ memorandum summarizes conversations among members of the Bulgarian trade delegations _____ inferring from the conversations considerable dissatisfaction with the Party and the political and economic system on the part of the trade delegation. _____ the

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conversations suggests equally plausibly that the inference of discontent is no more than the easy-going griping of bureaucrats chatting informally and speculatively about things "back home." _____ does not necessarily suggest serious disaffection.

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_____ reported that a fire broke out in a cotton-goods factory in Kharmanli on 7 or 8 March. Arrests and rumors concerning an empty baggage van found near the premises suggests the possibility of sabotage.

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V. GERMANY

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■ reports of the effects on the 20th CPSU Party Congress relate the anxiety and uneasiness of the Party's middle and lower levels on how to deal with the denigration of Stalin. The upper sections of these two levels generally avoid discussing the "Stalin problem." When occasionally forced to respond by a point-blank question, they fall back on the anti-Stalin statement of Ulbricht in Neues Deutschland, the Party newspaper, as the official line. What one report describes as a "revolutionary mood" in the SED, appears from other reports to be only murmurings of dissatisfaction with the equivocal line on Stalin and an occasional forthright request for better guidance on how to deal with the Stalin question.

ADDITION

Poland

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A recent report [redacted] on Poland re-iterates the rivalry between Ochab and Cyrankiewicz and gives the alignment of Politburo members behind each. Ochab is described as being in a weak position and apt to lose his position as Party Secretary. Ochab's appointment to the position is said not to have been forced by Khrushchev [redacted]. Dislike of Khrushchev and courage to stand up to him is again reported. Nonintervention by the Soviets in the Ochab-Cyrankiewicz rivalry and in the campaign of criticism of Stalin is attributed to uncertainty and confusion on the part of the Soviets [redacted]. Cyrankiewicz is reported hopeful of an American loan of more than one billion dollars but has not dared to discuss it with Ochab [redacted]

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Hungary

The populace and Party activists are dissatisfied with Rakosi's weak denunciation of the "cult of personality." Party activists' questioning of Rakosi on the "cult of personality" was quashed by the latter's suggesting Radio Free Europe must have been responsible for the question [redacted]. [redacted] reports Austrian police are observing the continued dismantling of border security installations.

Czechoslovakia

[redacted] reports the arrest and quick release of students involved in an anti-regime demonstration parade. The demonstration appears to have been expected inasmuch as an unusually large complement of police were on hand. It is the belief of a Prague Technical Institute official that the demonstration was staged by the regime and may result in restrictive action against universities.

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